

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1346

By Casada

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Representative Mike Bell for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee as a member of the House of Representatives.

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that the members of this body should honor those fellow legislators who have performed their duties with the utmost probity, and whose efforts during their time in office have been dedicated to providing thoughtful and exemplary service to their district and to this great State; and

WHEREAS, Representative Mike Bell of Riceville is one such distinguished public servant who has served both his constituency and this legislative body with honor and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Representative Bell is a highly influential figure in the political, social, and civic lives of the 23rd House District, which includes McMinn County and part of Monroe County, and he has served his constituents in numerous capacities, always working diligently at his elected duties and expending the necessary effort to understand the opposing sides of complex issues; and

WHEREAS, Mike Bell has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to the good people of the 23rd House District, who have evinced their firm belief in his abilities as a legislator by electing him to serve two terms as their representative, a position in which he has performed admirably; and

WHEREAS, a member of the 105th and 106th General Assemblies, Mike Bell has been prominent as a dedicated and well-informed legislator who always votes his conscience; and

WHEREAS, as an active and dynamic participant in the legislative process, Representative Bell currently renders sterling service as the Chair of the House Family Justice

Subcommittee and as a member of the House Children and Family Affairs Committee, House Conservation and Environment Committee, and House Parks and Tourism Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, he has previously served with distinction as the Secretary of the House Consumer and Employee Affairs Committee and as a member of the House Government Operations Committee and House Agriculture Committee; and

WHEREAS, during his first term in office, Mike Bell was elected by his peers as Freshman Leader and Assistant Floor Leader for the House Republican Caucus; he presently serves as the House Republican Caucus Secretary; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious tenure in office, Representative Bell has been a strong advocate for home education issues and Second Amendment rights; and

WHEREAS, in addition to shared parenting legislation, he is sponsoring the "Tennessee Health Freedom Act" in the 106th General Assembly; a legislative response to Tennesseans' concerns, this visionary act protects the right of an individual to purchase, and the right of doctors to provide, lawful medical services without penalty; and

WHEREAS, an advocate who home-schools his own children, Mike Bell has sponsored legislation to require all state and local government entities to recognize diplomas issued by home schools and church-related schools as having the same rights and privileges of diplomas issued by public school systems; and

WHEREAS, a native of Bradley County, Mike Bell is truly a Renaissance man, holding the diverse titles of small businessman, farmer, and volunteer emergency worker; he currently lives on his farm in southern McMinn County with his wife and five children; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who truly appreciates the responsibilities, as well as the privileges, of leadership and citizenship, he donates his time and energies as a member of the Tennessee Farm Bureau, Tennessee Firearms Association, Claxton Volunteer Emergency Services, and McMinn County Republican Party; and

WHEREAS, a man of deep and abiding Christian faith, he is a graduate of Bradley Central High School and holds an associate's degree from Cleveland State Community College; and

WHEREAS, Mike Bell proved his true mettle as a citizen-legislator in 2008, when he broke his femur while fighting a house fire in rural McMinn County as a volunteer with the Claxton Fire Department; even though he was forced to undergo surgery to repair the bone and miss some of the legislative session, he did not let the mere inconvenience of a broken leg hold him down for long, and he was soon zipping around Capitol Hill on a scooter while attending to his legislative duties, and as quickly as his injuries permitted, he resumed his service as a volunteer firefighter; and

WHEREAS, this noble son of the soil demonstrated great manual dexterity and peerless mental concentration at the Mid-East Tennessee Regional Fair in 2007, when he bested worthy competitors McMinn County Mayor John Gentry and Fairest of the Fair Heather Brooks to claim the prestigious title of Milking Champion, thereby bolstering his credentials in public service; and

WHEREAS, Representative Bell was involved in one of the oddest events in affiliated legislative history in February 2010, when two people illegally entered his van, which was parked in his hotel's parking lot, during the night to smoke a little marijuana, leaving behind ashes in a box of Tennessee Blue Books; after the identities of the culprits were discovered, they apologized profusely, and since there was nothing taken from the van and no damage done, Representative Bell magnanimously declined to press charges, electing instead to remedy the malodorous situation with a few air fresheners; and

WHEREAS, the gentleman from Riceville has distinguished himself among his legislative peers by having the only office in which both a deer head and a disabled gun are displayed prominently; and

WHEREAS, throughout his outstanding career as a public servant, Mike Bell has worked tirelessly on behalf of his constituents, bringing to his office an honorable bearing and the traditional values of hard work and common sense; and

WHEREAS, having proved himself to be a thoughtful and dedicated leader, Representative Bell is eager to offer himself for public service in a new capacity and is seeking the office of Senator for the 9th Senatorial District; and

WHEREAS, his many civic and professional accomplishments aside, Mike Bell is most appreciative of the love and companionship he shares with his wife, the former Lisa Brumley of

Cleveland, their five children: Nathan, age 22, who proudly serves his country in the United States Marine Corps and presently lives at Camp LeJuene, North Carolina with his wife, Priscilla; Laura, age 20, who is currently attending Cleveland State Community College; Zack, age 18, who plans to join the U.S. Air Force when he completes high school this year; Rachael, age 15; and Michaela, age 12; and their dog, Poochie; and

WHEREAS, Representative Mike Bell is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized for his exemplary tenure in this body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Representative Mike Bell for his meritorious service to Tennessee as a member of the House of Representatives, commend him for his countless contributions and many good works in service of the citizens of the 23rd House District, and extend to him our best wishes for much success as he continues to fight the good fight as a member of the Senate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.